

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the following remarks.

Claim 19 has been amended. Claims 20-22 and 30-34 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter has been added.

This amendment changes and deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 19 and 23-25 are now pending in this application.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 19-23, 25, 30, 31, 33 and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,506,697 to Li et al. (hereafter “Li”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,659,164 to Schmid et al. (hereafter “Schmid”). Claims 24 and 32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Li and Schmid, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,176,427 to Antognini (hereafter “Antognini”). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 19 is directed to an image forming apparatus. Claim 19 recites “an operating condition image producing unit which produces image data of a character string as second image data, indicative of operating conditions which determine image quality of the apparatus and include the image inputting condition input by the input unit.” Thus in claim 19, the second image data, which is indicative of operating conditions which determine image quality of the apparatus and include the image inputting condition input by the input unit, is image data of a character string. None of the references of Li, Schmid and Antognini suggest this feature of claim 19 in the context of that claim, or the advantages attendant thereto.

In contrast to the second image data as recited in claim 19, the code symbol 45 of Li, which the Office Action equates with the second image data as claimed, is preferably in

PDF417 format, i.e., in a two-dimensional bar code symbol format (See col. 7, lines 50-51; col. 3, lines 61-66), and is not a character string.

Schmid fails to cure the deficiencies of Li. Schmid discloses cover pages with machine-readable coded information (MRI) (col. 4, lines 8-16), where the MRI may contain information such as settings for a scanner (col. 4, lines 22-26). Even if there were motivation to combine Schmid with Li (which there is not) so that the Li code symbol was replaced with the MRI of Schmid containing settings for a scanner, the resultant combination would not meet the limitations of claim 19, because the MRI of Schmid is not a character string, but is merely machine readable coded information.

Antognini also fails to cure the deficiencies of Li and Schmid. Antognini discloses data tiles containing digital data relevant to the human readable information on a substrate. The data tiles, however, are not a character string, but are merely machine readable information in contrast to the second image data of claim 19. Thus, even if Antognini was combined with Li and Schmid, the resultant combination would not meet the limitations of claim 19.

Moreover, the above references of Li, Schmid and Antognini fail to suggest the advantages of the present invention of claim 19 where both the first and second image data, as that data is recited, are synthesized on the same sheet of paper, and the second image data is a character string. The present invention of claim 19 provides important information to a user, such as a serviceperson, in character string format, to aid the user in repairing or maintaining the scanner, an advantage not recognized or suggested by Li, Schmid and Antognini. With the present invention of claim 19, a serviceperson may readily check the operating conditions of the scanner by reading the second image data in character string format. This is not possible with the Li system, even if modified by Schmid and Antognini.

The dependent claims, 23-25, all ultimately depend from claim 19 and are patentable for at least the same reasons, as well as for further patentable features recited therein.

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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